



Board of Selectmen
Town Hall Hearing Room
December 9, 2010
Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:00p.m. by Selectmen Erik Tolley. Selectmen present: Bud Groskopf Tracy Post and Curt Sears. Also Attending: Town Administrator Robert C. Lawton, Jr. Selectman Suzanne McAuliffe was absent. The Board of Selectmen gave the pledge of allegiance.

Police Chief Interviews

Mr. Tolley thanked Chief Almonte for his over 30 years of public service and dedication to the Town of Yarmouth. Mr. Tolley described the process for the interviews that evening and introduced the Search Consultant Steve Unsworth. Mr. Unsworth briefed the Board on the assessment center he conducted with the candidates earlier in the week.

Lt. Michael Bryant

- *Question from Mr. Groskopf: What qualities do you believe are necessary to be an effective Police Chief? Answer from Lt. Bryant: Has to be a leader and a role model for the officers who work under him. Promoting the Police Department in a positive manner to the public.*
- *Question from Mr. Groskopf: How important do you think the Chief's relationship with the Union is? Answer from Lt. Bryant: Has to be very strong since, with the exception of the deputy Chief, the entire department is derived from that Union. The two groups have to work in tandem with each other.*
- *Question from Ms. Post: There has been some sentiment or rumblings about morale issues kind of declining. Do you feel that is a sentiment that is accurate? Why? And what would you do to change it? Answer from Lt. Bryant: Moral within any police department has its ups and downs, it can depend on management, budget and financing and even contractual issues. Within the last three years there have been some extreme highs and lows in the Yarmouth Police Department. Most recently, he witnessed it dip when Chief Almonte announced his retirement. He feels that a replacement of that position, along with listening, cooperating and re-motivating the employees would eliminate a majority of that apprehension and uneasiness.*
- *Question from Ms. Post: Yarmouth deserves the best possible Police Chief; do you believe you are that person? Why/why not? Answer from Lt. Bryant: He does agree that Yarmouth does deserve the best Police Chief and he believes that he can be that person. The teamwork within the Police Department management team is remarkably impressive and all candidates are well qualified to enter the position.*
- *Question from Mr. Sears: Do you believe it is important to be visible in the community? Answer from Lt. Bryant: Absolutely it is important to be visible in the community. One aspect of being visible is having the Police Chief wear the Police Uniform and showing the public and the Police department that the Chief is part of the team. Joining groups and agencies creates the visibility as well.*
- *Question from Mr. Sears: Are there any organizational changes you would make if you were selected the next Chief. Answer from Lt. Bryant: The first change would be to fill the vacancy from his position and move down the line. As far as an internal restricting, there was one done several months ago but there might be some minor changes at first and would look for input from the entire Police Staff prior to changes being made.*
- *Question from Mr. Tolley: How would you not allow friendships to stand in the way of any disciplinary actions he might have to take on his fellow officers? Answer from Lt. Bryant: When a Police Officer moves up the ranks, each promotion changes the relationships and dynamics between the officer as one moves up to a supervisor and the other is the lower ranked employee.*

- Question from Mr. Tolley: Can you explain why and how the promotion policy has changed over the years and if the current structure could be improved? Answer from Lt. Bryant: He was on the union's side of the change and some of the changes revolved around the weight of the written portions vs. the interview portion that was done internally rather than externally. One major change would be adding the assessment center exercise that he and the others just went through for the Chief's position.

Lt. Bryant described the background of his 20 years' experience working for the Yarmouth Police Department and thanked the Board for this opportunity.

Deputy Chief Frank Frederickson

Deputy Frederickson gave an explanation of his experience working in Yarmouth.

- Question from Ms. Post: There has been some sentiment or rumblings about morale issues kind of declining. Do you feel that is a sentiment that is accurate? Why? And what would you do to change it? Answer from Deputy Frederickson: Considering the financial climate the country has experienced in the last 3 years, yes he knows there are morale ups and downs within the staff. He explained some of the additional factors what create negative morale. The first thing to address morale, if he was appointed Chief, would be to conduct a command climate survey.
- Question from Ms. Post: Yarmouth deserves the best possible Police Chief; do you believe you are that person? Why/why not? Answer from Deputy Frederickson: At this time, he believes he is the best possible person. Working side by side with Chief Almonte the last three years so he is very familiar with the needs of the department and the needs of the public. He has a good firm feel for the community.
- Question from Mr. Sears: Do you believe it is important to be visible in the community? Answer from Deputy Frederickson: Very important, especially for the Chief. The value of being visible brings a comfort level to the public.
- Question from Mr. Sears: Are there any organizational changes you would make if you were selected the next Chief. Answer from Deputy Frederickson: He has ideas but they might not be what is best for the team so he first would meet with the staff and talk. He also has a goal of accreditation to be completed within a year and a half.
- Question from Mr. Groskopf: What qualities do you believe are necessary to be an effective Police Chief? Answer from Deputy Frederickson: There are a wide range of elements, but a vital element is an adjustable leadership style. An open door policy is crucially important as well.
- Question from Mr. Groskopf: How important do you think the Chief's relationship with the Union is? Answer from Deputy Frederickson: he was a Union member for 28 years, negotiated 4 contracts on the Union side, however he has been on the "dark Side" for years and has worked very closely with Mr. Lawton so he is very familiar with the Town's goals as well as the needs of the Union. He also has handled all grievances for the past three years.
- Question from Mr. Tolley: Can you explain why and how the promotion policy has changed over the years and if the current structure could be improved? Answer from Deputy Frederickson: The hiring policy is a contractual requirement and has changed over the years. His experience has been that the motivation of the change is initiated by primarily who doesn't get promoted. There are good processes in it but there are unnecessary factors and moving towards an assessment center would be better for the promotional process in general.
- Question from Mr. Tolley: How would you not allow friendships to stand in the way of any disciplinary actions he might have to take on his fellow officers? Answer from Deputy Frederickson: He has been involved with a number of discipline issues involving people he knows and work beside for many years. His experience has been that the officers are adults and if an issue arises where discipline is necessary, it is taken and then they move forward.

Lt. Steven Xiarhos

Lt. Xiarhos gave an explanation of his experience working in Yarmouth.

- *Question from Mr. Sears: Do you believe it is important to be visible in the community? Answer from Lt. Xiarhos: Absolutely, the Chief of Police should be part of the community, whether a member of the Rotary, a team coach, collecting packages for the Troops, running a road race, the public needs to know who the Chief is.*
- *Question from Mr. Sears: Are there any organizational changes you would make if you were selected the next Chief. Answer from Lt. Xiarhos: Even though the organizational structure was just revised in July, it can be tweaked a bit more. The officers need to feel safe and supported by the Management Team. Accreditation, public education and improved training are a key goals of his.*
- *Question from Mr. Groskopf: What qualities do you believe are necessary to be an effective Police Chief? Answer from Lt. Xiarhos: Integrity and a strong sense of leadership and supporting the officers.*
- *Question from Mr. Groskopf: How important do you think the Chief's relationship with the Union is? Answer from Lt. Xiarhos: The Union is part of the department and he would support that part of the organization.*
- *Question from Ms. Post: There has been some sentiment or rumblings about morale issues kind of declining. Do you feel that is a sentiment that is accurate? Why? And what would you do to change it? Answer from Lt. Xiarhos: in the last three years this country has gone through really tough times and has been very trying on the Police Department. Morale is connected to attitude so he would lead by example and stay positive, work with the community, support the team and make sure the little things are taken care of.*
- *Question from Ms. Post: Yarmouth deserves the best possible Police Chief; do you believe you are that person? Why/why not? Answer from Lt. Xiarhos: With 32 years of experience, 3 college degrees, going through the ranks from summer cop up to Lieutenant, networking with the community and other agencies. He believes there are just as qualified candidates; Frank Frederickson. He and Frank started as summer cops together, worked their way up the ranks together and he knows that he would be an excellent Police Chief.*
- *Question from Mr. Tolley: Can you explain why and how the promotion policy has changed over the years and if the current structure could be improved? Answer from Lt. Xiarhos: Because the Police Department is not civil service, the persons they hire are usually the cream of the crop and go through a very rigorous training and promotion process. He thinks the mixture of a test, interview and background check is a great way to get an accurate picture of what that person has done and more importantly what they are going to do.*
- *Question from Mr. Tolley: How would you not allow friendships to stand in the way of any disciplinary actions he might have to take on his fellow officers? Answer from Lt. Xiarhos: Being Police Chief requires not only a friendly attitude amongst the department but has to incorporate and balance being firm and fair. Going through the ranks an officer gradually gets to that point of mentoring and coaching, understands how to lead, when to be a friend and knows the importance of pride and discipline within the organization.*

Lt. Kevin Lennon

Lt. Lennon gave an explanation of his experience working in Yarmouth.

- *Question from Mr. Groskopf: What qualities do you believe are necessary to be an effective Police Chief? Answer from Lt. Lennon: A Police Chief needs to be a good leader, decisive, work cooperatively with the members of the department, of the Town and of the community.*
- *Question from Mr. Groskopf: How important do you think the Chief's relationship with the Union is? Answer from Lt. Lennon: The Unions are very important to the organization and the Police Chief needs to work cooperatively with the Union. There will be times where mutual agreement is not met on certain items but discussion needs to remain constant between the Chief and the Union, for the better of the organization.*

- Question from Mr. Sears: Do you believe it is important to be visible in the community? Answer from Lt. Lennon: It is very important for the Chief to be visible, from meetings, community groups, open door policy within the department, reaching out to different organizations.
- Question from Mr. Sears: Are there any organizational changes you would make if you were selected the next Chief. Answer from Lt. Lennon: He would not make any immediate changes. He would like to expand the organizational chart to include the Sergeants more and allow them to use their supervisory tools to help more the department forward.
- Question from Ms. Post: There has been some sentiment or rumbings about morale issues kind of declining. Do you feel that is a sentiment that is accurate? Why? And what would you do to change it? Answer from Lt. Lennon: Declining morale is a perception for the officers. There are certain areas out of Administrations hands, economy and budget which obviously affect morale. But he would listen to the concerns of the officers and working to resolve and allay some of those fears to come to a positive solution.
- Question from Ms. Post: Yarmouth deserves the best possible Police Chief; do you believe you are that person? Why/why not? Answer from Lt. Lennon: He feels he is a very qualified candidate for the position of Chief. He has taken his profession very seriously, taking numerous training classes, tried to educate as best he could, and tried to surround himself and contributes his success with a good support staff.
- Question from Mr. Tolley: Can you explain why and how the promotion policy has changed over the years and if the current structure could be improved? Answer from Lt. Lennon: The scoring of interviews changed most recently in the promotion policy. Though having just gone through the assessment center for the Chief position, it was an eye opener to him, a good way to judge his personal and professional abilities and this process would be something that he would be in favor of incorporating into the promotion policy.
- Question from Mr. Tolley: How would you not allow friendships to stand in the way of any disciplinary actions he might have to take on his fellow officers? Answer from Lt. Lennon: He has always maintained a professional level as a police officer. He does have friends who are patrol officers and sergeants who spend time together after working hours but while on duty there is a line that is drawn, a job to do and takes his job very seriously.

A ten minute intermission was taken.

Ms. Post asked Mr. Unsworth, after going through this process and evaluating the four candidates how does Yarmouth fair with the candidates they have before them that evening? Mr. Unsworth stated that he had full confidence with the 4 candidates and one of the best examples of teamwork during the assessment center he and his colleagues had ever experienced. Mr. Sears spoke favorably of the process and thanked the candidates. Mr. Groskopf pointed out the teamwork comfort level between the four candidates as being superior. Mr. Sears stated that with the scores from the Assessment and how the interviews went that evening, he felt that Frank Frederickson was the best candidate. Ms. Post, Mr. Groskopf and Mr. Tolley agreed.

MOTION: To move that the Board of Selectmen nominate Frank Frederickson as Chief of Police

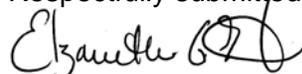
Motion by: Curt Sears **Seconded by:** Bud Groskopf Yea 4 Nay 0

Adjourn

MOTION: To move that the Board of Selectmen adjourn the meeting at 8:15pm

Motion by: Curt Sears **Seconded by:** Tracy Post Yea 4 Nay 0

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth G. Hartsgrove